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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JERUSALEM 001010

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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE. NSC FOR ABRAMS/SINGH/PASCUAL

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TAGS: [KWBG](#) [IS](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#)

SUBJECT: AREA B PALESTINIAN POLICE STATIONS SPARTAN BUT
OPERATIONAL

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: PolOff and LTG Fraser staff visited four of eleven newly-opened Palestinian police stations in Area B on June 11 and met with police officers who discussed Israeli coordination and personnel/resource deficiencies. Commanders said they need Israeli clearance to execute any operation in Area B, including routine patrols, and Israeli clearance response times vary greatly. Despite difficulties, all four stations are operational and morale appeared to be high, with officers describing their work as "putting into place the building blocks of a future state." END SUMMARY.

Four New Stations Up and Running

¶2. (C) On June 11, PolOff visited four newly opened Palestinian police stations in Area B (Attil, Allar and Bayt Lid near Tulkarem and Kfar Thulth near Qalqiliya). Each of the four new police stations was operational but the facilities had minimal personnel, vehicles, weapons or equipment visible. (Note: These four stations are among 11 that have been opened thus far out of 20 that the GOI committed to opening in an April 18 trilateral meeting between PM Salam Fayyad, DefMin Ehud Barak and Secretary Rice. End note).

¶3. (C) Police commanders at each station provided basic statistics on their respective operating environments and equipment:
-- Attil (serving 30,000 Palestinians) has 32 officers, 4 AK-47's, 3 pistols, and one car.
-- Allar (serving 23,000 Palestinians) has 14 officers, 4 AK-47's, 2 pistols, and one car.
-- Bayt Lid (serving 17,000 Palestinians) has 17 officers, 4 AK-47's, 3 pistols, and one car.
-- Kfar Thulth (serving 30,000 Palestinians) has 30 officers, 15 AK-47's, 2 pistols, and one car.
All commanders said they require additional resources and more training to reach full capability. Commanders said personnel are being paid regularly and basic operational expenses at the new stations are all being met.

Inefficient GOI-PA Coordination

¶4. (C) The ranking officers at each new station said they must receive Israeli clearance before conducting any patrols or arrest operations in Area B. They said responses from the District Coordination Office (DCO) for operational requests can take "anywhere from 30 minutes to full day" and sometimes does not come at all. These restrictions, they said, hinder their ability to pursue criminals and make them look weak and ineffective in front of local residents. Commanders also complained that they regularly receive calls ("sometimes three times a day") from the IDF demanding they remain inside their stations while an IDF operation is carried out.

Transferring criminals to courts or detention facilities also requires time-consuming clearance, they said.

Tricks of the trade

15. (C) During PolOff's visit, the police demonstrated creativity in operating within the limited authority afforded by Israeli restrictions. One police official used his private vehicle and traveled in civilian clothing to have a better chance of making it through IDF checkpoints.

Commanders said they sometimes transfer non-violent criminals to court or detention facilities in civilian cars and clothing, as transfer requests sometimes "take forever or are just ignored." Commanders showed off magnetic decals they affix to "deputize" private vehicles as patrol cars to make up for deficiencies in their fleets.

"The building blocks of a new state"

16. (C) Each station commander identified illegal/stolen cars, drugs, and family disputes as their main challenges. Rattling off figures for stolen/unregistered cars, cases referred to PA courts, imprisonments, warrants served, and fines levied, commanders displayed a notable pride in their accomplishments since they initiated operations in their precincts in May. Commanders in the Tulkarem area said they received 500 applications for 50 new police positions. Police officers, they said, take pride in "putting into place the building blocks" of a future state and feel prestige as

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police officers. (Comment: The commanders at each station appeared much younger than their regional bosses. Newly-appointed PA police chief Hazim Attallah has promoted several promising but more junior officers to senior positions since assuming his post, which has led to significant improvements in force effectiveness and morale according to PA and EU security contacts. End comment).

Nine stations announced still unopened

17. (C) In addition to the four stations visited, seven more Area B stations have opened since April 18: three near Ramallah (Dayr Ghassanah, Arura, Im Sharayat), one near Jenin (Bayt Qad), two near Tubas (Aqqaba, Tammun), and one near Nablus (Bayt Furik). Nine additional Area B stations approved on April 18 have yet to open pending final IDF approval and PA readiness to supply the necessary personnel, equipment and resources for infrastructure repairs and fixtures.

WALLES